

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated January 23, 2004. Claims 1-31 are pending, with claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 being in independent form. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 to clarify the claimed invention.

Claims 1 and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,052,445 to Bashoura et al. Claims 2, 5, 6, 12-14, 21, 25 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,871 to Yuki. Claims 3, 4, 15-17, 23, 24, 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,381,527 to Inniss et al. Claims 7, 8, 21, 25 and 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Inniss and further in view of Yuki. Claims 18-20, 22 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Bashoura.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application is directed to a network facsimile device (and a method for controlling the network facsimile device), and more specifically to improvements to a network facsimile device. A network facsimile device is typically a device which has a built-in scanner for scanning a document and outputting image information corresponding to the scanned document. The network facsimile device according to the present application can transmit the image information through a selected one of plural communication modes (for example, by electronic mail, by real time Internet communication, by facsimile communication through a public network, etc.) to a specified destination address (for example, an e-mail address, an IP address, a telephone number,

etc.). The network facsimile device is provided with means for operator input of destination addresses, each address including a plurality of address information (for example, an IP address, an electronic mail address and a telephone number) respectively corresponding to plural communication modes. The address information input by the operator through the input means, for each destination, are registered, so that image information can be transmitted to a selected one of the registered destinations through any of the communication modes by using corresponding registered address information. Because the address information is registered, a reduced number of keys is required for selecting the dial information of the destination address to which designated image information is to be communicated.

For example, independent claim 1 is directed to a network facsimile device for communicating in at least one of a plurality of communication modes for transmitting designated image information to a designated destination. The network facsimile device has built-in, amongst other device elements, (a) scanner means which scans a document and generates document image information corresponding to the scanned document, (b) input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses to which the document image information is to be transmitted, and (c) address information registering means for registering the plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, input by the operator through the input means, for each destination.

Bashoura, as understood by Applicant, appears to be directed to a fax director device which can be used along with a personal computer to perform fax routing for transmissions from a standard fax machine, without adapting the fax machine. The fax director, which is a device

separate from and transparent to the fax machine, decodes a telephone number which is generated by the fax machine, and then compares the decoded telephone number to a look-up table. If an Internet address corresponding to the decoded telephone number is found in the table, the fax is downloaded from the fax machine, converted to a computer file, and then sent to the matched Internet address. If no corresponding Internet address is found in the table, the decoded telephone number is dialed on a telephone line and, thereafter, the telephone line is connected to the fax machine for normal fax delivery.

It should be noted that the fax machine of Bashoura is a conventional fax machine which allows an operator to enter only a telephone number, and the fax director of Bashoura is a separate device which is connected to the fax machine. The standard fax machine of Bashoura does not have a built-in capability of communicating in a selected one of plural communication modes such as by electronic mail, by real time Internet communication, by facsimile communication through a public network, etc.

Moreover, Applicant does not find teaching or suggestion in Bashoura of a network facsimile device which comprises at least the following built-in device elements: (a) scanner means which scans a document and generates document image information corresponding to the scanned document; (b) input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to a plurality of communication modes through which designated image information can be transmitted to a designated destination, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses; and (c) address information registering means for registering the plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, input by the operator through the input means, for each destination, as provided by independent claim 1 as amended.

Yuki, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a facsimile apparatus with adaptors for communication with plural partners through a public switched telephone network, a local area network and an integrated services digital network. According to the Office Action, Yuki discloses a facsimile apparatus having (a) a display means for displaying registered address information stored in memory, and (b) one-touch dial operation.

Inniss, as understood by Applicant, is directed to distribution of messages utilizing a data processing system through a distribution channel which is selected in response to a user selection of a particular distribution media. If transmission via the selected distribution channel fails, an alternate distribution media is selected and the message is converted to that alternate distribution media. According to the Office Action, Inniss discloses prioritizing the distribution media.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network facsimile device which comprises at least the following built-in device elements: (a) scanner means which scans a document and generates document image information corresponding to the scanned document; (b) input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to a plurality of communication modes through which designated image information can be transmitted to a designated destination, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses; and (c) address information registering means for registering the plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, input by the operator through the input means, for each destination, as provided by independent claim 1 as amended.

Since the cited art does not disclose or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention, claim 1 is believed to be allowable thereover. Independent claims 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art for at least similar reasons.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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